STACK
ANNEX

5
026
231

A
000 093 900
9
UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY

JAMES DALLY
OLD AND RARE BOOKS
Oatlands, Tasmania
Telephone Oatlands 90

THE CHINESE QUESTION:

OR

YELLOW AGONY.

BY ROBERT SHAPLAND,

ADELAIDE.

Adelaide:

PRINTED BY WEBB, VARDON, AND PRITCHARD, GRESHAM-STREET.

1880.

The Chinese Question.

Fellow-colonists and gentlemen of South Australia—Finding the Press of this part of the colony to be withholding from you many facts connected with this important question, and therefore leading you as it were blindfold into a state I firmly believe to be sure distress and ruin, and being aware that the majority of you have not had sufficient experience with the Chinese to judge or come to correct conclusions when you have but little more than one side of this question quoted to you, and having been refused space by the Press of this city for the publication of facts which appear contrary to their views, if I can judge from their writings, I place before you these observations.

The *Observer*, May 15, publishes sixteen verses in all in the following style. They say—

> So now to end,
> Pray do not send
> Poor John to Jericho, but lend
> Your aid his labour to befriend.

I think this verse is sufficient for you to judge the tone of the others, and the general feeling of that portion of the Press.

I know it is not wise to make an attack on the Press—the power of the country—and I so weak; but I feel that I should not be doing justice to my country to hide the light I have been favoured with, and let nearly all my fellow-colonists be led in the dark to positive ruin. From the above lines we may conclude that writer to be ready to help and encourage the Chinese here all he can. Does he wish to insinuate that he wishes to see Chinese here to compete against his fellow-colonists, after the amount of costly proof of the inequality of the competition without going farther for this proof than the Northern Territory, in which place the Chinese have been working for the Government of this colony for one shilling per day! Many will say this was on relief work, but nevertheless it goes to prove the small amount it is possible for them to live upon and work; for if they could just drag out an existence in the Territory for that amount, they could live fairly

1353563

well here for it, for they can get much more for the money here. He might just as well ask us to draw the plough or dray in competition against the horse, for I have seen Chinese carrying quartz and firewood for a price that would be only fair pay for a European with a horse team, in a place we could not live in tents, on little better than shepherds' rations, for less than fifteen to twenty shillings per week. What good have the numbers of Chinese of the Territory done for the colony? I will quote a portion of the correspondence which has been published here and elsewhere. On the 24th January one writer says: — "Storekeeping, boating, carpentering, baking, washing, &c., are fast getting into the hands of the Chinese, and driving away European labour. They work for one another at about half the rate they do for white employers, work longer hours, and go in for seven days a week. The consequence of this has been felt for some time, and now begins to be seen. All who can leave the Territory are doing so; others unable to do so, do not manage to get a bare living. Stock of all descriptions is valueless, and no property here is good enough to raise the wind on. What will it be about April, when the remaining Government money for this year is spent?" It appears they struck a patch of gold about this dreaded time. The *Queenslander*, April 17th, states:—"They say—(meaning the Adelaideans)—and say justly that the Territory has been a continual drain on their resources. At present it costs them about £42,000 a year, the money being chiefly spent in payment of officials and the support of Chinese. Our correspondent complains that they have positively refused to diminish this sum by imposing a tax on opium, and otherwise causing the Chinese to contribute to the cost of governing them. The Adelaide Government has tried the experiment of assisting the formation of a colony by admitting Chinese under conditions as favourable as are to be found in Australia, and they have carried it unflinchingly to the end. And that end has been utter and disastrous failure."

In spite of such evidence as this in their Territory, and the volumes of similar evidence from the other colonies and places where the Chinese have taken to, the Adelaide papers will contain long articles of imaginary evidence in their favour, and rejecting nearly all of the other side of the question. The *Queenslander* goes on to say:—"The Chinese have not formed agricultural settlements either on their own account or under the direction of Europeans; they have not assisted the development or permanent advancement, and they have done nothing directly or indirectly to add to the prosperity of the settlement. They have scraped together whatever alluvial gold was accessible to them—and we believe that they have departed

from their usual habit to a certain extent, and found new patches undiscovered by Europeans—and they have strangled nearly all European attempts at colonization, miners and trades alike. Nearly all the white men who went to the Northern Territory have either been ruined, driven out, or reduced to great poverty; in fact, at the present time, the scanty population of the settlement consists mainly of people in the Government service and Chinese. The latter are sucking the juice of the orange, and leaving the empty rind to the Adelaide patrons."

It continues by saying—"We must be thankful to our neighbours for having offered us so conclusive a demonstration of the uselessness of Chinese immigration, although we cannot help regretting the forlorn condition of the fine territory that has been the scene of the experiment. The matter is one in which we are greatly interested, and indeed it is of importance to all Australia that a wealthy and thriving settlement should be formed on the north coast of the continent round what promised to be in the future one of its important outports. It will be nothing less than a misfortune if our neighbours obstinately persist in maintaining it as a social plague spot, threatening contagion to all around it. We hope they will not do so. They have tried the experiment, and they cannot be so unwise as to misread the lesson it has taught them."

I am afraid our Government and Parliamentary gentlemen are misreading this lesson, striking as it is, and appear to have made up their minds to continue to ignore the facts of this case, until they are themselves out of their homes, even as they have caused many of their fellow-colonists to be starved out of their homes or ruined in the Northern Territory. In fact they are not taking satisfactory action to prevent the evil being extended to our southern territory. Fancy such words as—"All our merchants are becoming insolvent, property of all descriptions is valueless, and all who can leave are leaving." In the face of volumes of such facts, a portion of the Press says—

Find if you can
A better than
The docile, meek John Chinaman.

What do you think of your guides writing in this tone, and leading you blindfolded into the snare? These writers have for their argument—Are they to pay a European ten shillings for a chair if they can get Chinese to come here and make them for six? I guess it would pay them much better in the long run to get the European-made chair, for they are superior in make; but even if they were not so, would it not be wiser for them to get the little they require from those who are con-

tributing towards their living by purchasing their publications and paying for trade advertisements? To what extent are the Chinese patronising their labour? They not only object to patronise their work, but also rob those who have long contributed largely to their support, and helped to place them in their present position.

I find nearly all ready to admit this fact—that they can buy goods of a Chinaman cheaper than they can of a European, or that the Chinese can undersell Europeans in nearly everything they go in for. What of that? Many are ready to say, "Why, this is one of the greatest causes for taking objection to them." It is a natural thing for all to try and buy in the cheapest market. The consequence is that wherever a Chinaman starts he can command the trade around him by his underselling; for he can live and carry on his business for a great percentage less than a European.

If a European merchant—take one who is well known in Currie-street, for instance—say he employs 50 men at an average of 50s. per week—his outlay for wages per week would be £125.

A Chinese merchant can go into the same business, employ 10 per cent. more men, and he would board and lodge the lot for much less than £30 per week. He would get plenty, if there were many in the colony, for 10s. per week with board and lodging, making a total expense for employés per week of £57 10s., or less than half the expense in business, and about one-eighth of the family expenses.

How long could our friend at the corner hold his own against such a competitor? He would soon find, as many others have found, it an impossibility for him to hold his own against such a competitor. He would then have to do, as many others have done in the colonies (perhaps by the aid of his voice) go insolvent or approach that point, like most of the European merchants and business men of the Northern Territory, and be compelled to give place to the Chinese, who will always be able to undersell. "Live and let live;" this world is large and supplies room enough for all. But to let the Chinese come here to break up the homes of our fellow-colonists, to bring starvation and plague—this can never be true religion.

If China is becoming too thickly populated, let them do as we have done, make homes for themselves in the wilderness or strange lands. They have a splendid country close to their own which is unclaimed by any government, and not utilized to any great extent. If those who fancy Chinese labour would gather all who are now on the Australian Continent, take them and open up New Guinea with them, they would be working to the benefit of the world at large.

The comparisons I make are applicable to every station of life from house servants and all trades to the members of the Legislative Council. I find many under the impression that they will not adopt this trade, that trade, and so on; but let them ask themselves this question—Who does the work of those trades in China? The Chinese do. Then why will they not take to them here? What trades have they left untouched in these colonies? They start with gardening, cabinetmaking, storekeeping, &c., but as these become filled they are not slow at adopting other trades, and adopting roguery with them. At the Territory, Chinese masons built a chimney; when the party inspected it he put his finger in the soft mortar, and found soft sand start running out of the hole, which continued until the chimney fell, injuring the man who was standing by. The Chinese are noted for making such deceptions as these their study.

A party who became a friend of mine had bought two Chinese-made cedar chairs; she gave six shillings each; they scarcely had one month's use of very delicate handling before they commenced to fall to pieces. She tried to sell them, but she could not satisfactorily. She made inquiries as to what it would cost to get them reput together, and found she could not get them done for less than three shillings, and that by the Chinaman who manufactured them; so if the Chinese get all their chairs back in a month or six weeks, and put one shilling and sixpence worth of extra work on them, I think the Melbourne Commissioners were justified in excluding them from competing for the supply of the Exhibition chairs, for if they are made or thrown together as those mentioned, they could easily undersell, for European tradesmen would not be in business three months if they turned out such work I secured the chairs referred to, to show them to any one doubting my statement.

In speaking of this question I find a great many make light of the word "undersell." It is usually considered an advantage to buy of the cheapest seller, or the underseller; but there is an old saying, that exceptions are to be found to all rules; so I will try to show that buying off Chinese because they undersell Europeans is an exception to the rule, it being a disadvantage instead of an advantage. But I am afraid many will be inclined to prefer sticking to the old rule in preference to taking this exception for the reason of its suiting their purse. It has been proved beyond a doubt that Chinese can undersell Europeans in all parts of Australia. Thus their underselling soon brings them trade. The more they spread their businesses or become numerous the sooner they command the monopoly of such trades, and as they take

possession of the monopoly, so Europeans have to drop out of the race and give Chinkey best. It is in this way they damage or bring utter ruin to every civilised community that is fool enough to allow them to come amongst them. Many go away with the idea that the Chinese question or outcry is only the cabinetmaker's grievance, and the agitation of narrow-minded men; but this is a great misconception. I am inclined to believe that those who write in their favour are the narrow-minded party. I have seen the evil effects of the Chinese amongst Europeans brought home so plainly, that not one escaped without suffering heavily; many of us had to leave penniless. If the Chinese come here to drive the Europeans before them, as they have in all other places where they have become numerous, the squatter would have to seek a foreign market for about 75 per cent. more of his beef than he has to now, for the Chinese only use about 25 per cent. of the quantity used by Europeans.

In what way can this so-called cheap labour benefit Adelaide or South Australia proper? for if one can have cheap labour so can those he has to compete with, then his profits will amount to the same or less than it did before. Then, who benefits? Many will say the consumer; but the consumer would have cheap labour to compete against. He would be less able to pay the reduced price than he was the higher when he had his countrymen to compete with.

Is it right to allow all British possessions to be converted into Chinese settlements? In a British community or any other community Providence has provided for the old and the young, the poor and the rich. Many of our working men, when they become old and unable to compete with the world as they once did, might knock out an honest crust at gardening and many other such light callings. But what are these men to do if the Chinese are allowed to take possession of everything of this kind? They will be compelled to seek maintenance from the Government. Many other classes of the community will be robbed of the means of giving their families schooling, good clothing, and other comforts, and be compelled to take them to the factory or workshop at an early age to assist in obtaining the wants of other members of the family, who, through tender age or deformity, are unable to provide their own. The majority of the Chinese have no one to provide for but themselves. As the Chinese increase, so will the number of unemployed Europeans increase, and be compelled to seek other fields for their labour.

The *Northern Territory Times*, December 20th, says:—"We all admit that mining is languishing, and that if some action is not taken to develop the reefs the country will soon fall into

the hands of the Chinese altogether." December 27 it says:—"Our European population has dwindled considerably during the past twelve months, while the Asiatics have increased to an undesirable extent, and even if there was no objection to the number, the fact that the Coolie population is suffered to fill our gaols and hospitals, to occupy our gold fields, monopolise our trades, and devour our resources without responsibility and without taxation, is not complimentary to those who bore the heat and burden of prospecting and early settlement."

I am of opinion it is anything but complimentary to those in the southern part of the colony, who are taxed to an extent of over forty thousand pounds per annum chiefly to govern and support this pig-tailed band. What is the colony coming to, to allow the Press and a few of the upper ten to lead you all blindfold over such a cliff to utter ruin. Where does this evil lay? I believe I have found a strong sprout of its root. At a farewell breakfast given to Mr. Caleb Peacock, ex-Mayor of Adelaide, prior to his departure on a visit to Europe, His Excellency Sir William Jervois, in responding to a toast, took occasion to express his views upon the Chinese immigration question. According to the report in the *South Australian Register*, he said:—"Mr. Peacock proposes to go to India, and to visit the Malay Peninsula, and the seat of my late government, Singapore. It has been a great pleasure to me to have the opportunity in any small way I can manage to facilitate his visit to the Straits settlements, and amongst other letters of introduction which I have the honour of giving him, I have given him one to a gentleman who has long held—and usefully and worthily held to the advantage of the British community—a place in the Legislative Council of Singapore. And, gentleman, that member of the Council is a Chinaman. Now, I think that he may gain, and I am sure he will gain, a great deal of information which will be useful to this colony by his visit to Singapore. When he gets there he will see the boat in which he lands manned by Chinamen; his luggage will be taken to the hotel by Chinamen; when he gets to the hotel he will find the cook a Chinaman, the butler a Chinaman, and if there is a family he will find the nurse a Chinaman, and every department of life filled by this race. I must confess that when I came to the Australian colonies I was surprised to find the view that was held of what was called the invasion of the Chinese. And in Queensland, while they have knocked the project on the head which I proposed, because it would cost too large a sum of money to keep the Russians out, they charge every Chinaman £10 if he gets in. (Laughter.) This is the sort of sentiment which influences a great number of my friends on the Australian

continent. I believe, so far as it is in my power, it is my duty to dissipate such ideas, and so far as the Northern Territory of South Australia is concerned, I am sure that my friend Mr. Peacock, when he returns, having seen what I know he will see, and having examined for himself, will say to you, Gentlemen of South Australia, go and do likewise."

This part of the speech appeared to have been received with applause;
Surely an excessive supply of champagne must have been the cause.
I hope there were not many there who would do so in heart;
But I am afraid there were too many who would to play a fashionable part.

He said Queensland knocked the project on the head which he proposed for defences. I should rather think they did when they found he was doing his best to help Australia's worst enemy amongst them, and landing them free.

How ready some are to pick out one or two instances where a Chinaman has become a creditable member of society. They would be a rum lot if one could not be found in a Chinese settlement of thousands or millions.

A gentleman in Victoria who has long been working in connection with this cause, failing to effect the desired result in the colony, wrote to the Home Government in England, and received a reply that the question was one that had to be treated through the Governors of the colonies. This makes the question assume a very healthy appearance. When one Governor filled his house with them, another appeared to be itching to do likewise, and the others exhibit more or less a Chinkey tinge.

If I could have Chinese servants at my hall
I fancy I could cut it fat or tall,
And could save something out of my screw
That would place me independent of you;
And then at the end of my term
You can go to the devil to sink or burn.

The *Argus*, of May 12, states that the Chinese population in Victoria, when the census was last taken, in 1871, was 17,935, of whom 16,135 were on the goldfields, and that ever since then their numbers have been gradually but steadily diminishing. It was also ascertained in 1878 that the number then on the goldfields had decreased to 9,638. Are we to take this decrease on the goldfields as proportionate decrease in the colony? If so, we can fairly say that nearly half the Chinese have left the colony during that time. Well, we have continually seen figures such as 50, 60, 100, &c., of Chinese arriving in Melbourne; so that during the seven years I might roughly say that a number equal to 8,967, or the other half, has arrived in Victoria; and taking this to be the case, there must have left the colony in that time a number equal to 17,935, or the whole population in 1871.

The *Argus* says we often hear how it is the practice of the Chinese to come here, and after making a "pile" returning with it to China. The average amount of money taken home by those who are able to pay their own passage is only £20, and if one has £50 he is considered "rich." We must bear in mind these figures are collected at Chinese quarters. We know John is not so green as to shove his neck in the noose too readily, so we can fairly conclude that £20 is not over the mark per man. Thus the 17,935 Chinese who left Victoria in seven years, averaging £20 per man, have taken £358,700. If those trades or works had been in the hands of Anglo-Australians instead of the Chinese, nearly the whole of this sum would be still in the colony, and the buildings or other improvements done would be of a more permanent character. At this rate Queensland, New South Wales, and the other colonies must have let millions of money go to China, for little or nothing more than having its gullies and flats turned upside down, and a few sheets of bark stuck up here and there which stand to show where the enemy coiled.

Many of these Chinamen have come and gone several times with their £20, and many with 0's added. What would be the amount taken by Mr. Kong Meng (the Chinaman who supplied the reporter with some of his information) if he went back to China. His would likely be as many thousands as he set the average in pounds. But the writer of the article omitted to inform the public as to whether Mr. Kong Meng wears a pigtail or not. I would not mind risking a dollar that he does not wear one, for it has been my experience to find nearly all the Chinamen who have stopped in the colonies so long as he appears to have done to be men minus the tail, and this is often the cause of their long stay here.

The same writer states what the Chinese cabinetmakers buy of Europeans this, that, and the other. I know but few of them will buy of Europeans if the same is to be got from their countrymen, unless at wholesale, or as an occasional bait. They are not backward at tipping or making presents, if by so doing they can work their point, or secure a friend to work it. So beware, lest there be wolves in sheeps' clothing amongst you.

What are the noticeable changes in a township or gold-field, from the time of the first Chinaman's arrival to the time they become numerous. The changes are these:—In spite of good returns or crushings, the money will unmistakably become scarce, business of every kind will become slack, European business men go insolvent one after the other, unemployed Europeans increase—the majority of them will be compelled to seek fresh fields and give place to the Chinese, who will

ransack and pick up all surface valuables, and pretend to be always too poor to pay miners' rights, or otherwise contribute towards the cost of government, unless in a way they cannot possibly avoid.

Where is there a building of any magnitude in Australia which has been built by either them or their money to show any sign of their desire to advance the colony one iota? Where is there a large plantation of sugar, rice, coffee, tobacco, tea, or anything else to be found in Australia of a permanent character that the credit of which can be given to the Chinese after nearly thirty years of their ravishing work? I have not found one instance from the thousands of the Chinese population of Australia. I have heard of men selling their vote for a glass of beer, but I have found those who would sell their country for a cheap chair.

The *Advertiser* of May 26 starts its leader with—"A wave or ripple of the 'yellow agony,' which is said to be passing over the colonies, starting from Cape Yorke, taking Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria by the way, it will no doubt in due course round Cape Otway and climb up the map towards the equator, dropping in on ourselves on the road, and will be probably felt wherever an opium-chewing Mongolian waves his pigtail in the wind. Our consolation should be that it grows distinctly weaker as it runs."

The weakening of the wave as it runs is easily accounted for, for the yellow agony has been long and severely felt near the quarter it is said to have taken its rise from, and hundreds have had to leave all kinds of property to give place to the impoverishing hordes of Chinese that infested that quarter; but as it travelled south their numbers became less in proportion to the Europeans. Thus the shoe has not pinched so hard. Many a fop has bought small flash boots because they seemed to smile, or please his imagination, without considering the probability of their pinching. His neighbour (Queeesland) cautioned him, but he answered, "What do you know about it? If they'd pinch you, they will not me." But when he had taken them, tried them, and was going down the hill and walking on the lower levels he tried for some time to disguise the pain, but it becoming at last unbearable, he wished he had consulted common sense (Queensland, who had tried them) instead of allowing himself to be carried away by imaginary luxuries, which has placed him in yellow agony. An ex-Minister of Victoria felt a slight pinch when he started to descend the hill; but while in power (Adelaide at the present time) it is nonsense to think a meek, docile Chinaman can injure us.

I have met men of this sort in my travels, and watched them

go through the disagreeable changes, and as a matter of course try to lay the blame to something else; but when it can no longer be turned off, and the power lost, it's then—"Who'd a' thought it?"

Mr. Service, according to the *Advertiser*, when formally challenged in the Assembly to declare his policy on the Chinese question, replied very sensibly that the matter was not one which could be settled by the flourish of the pen. That a large influx of Chinese would be a national calamity he frankly admitted; but the matter was one, he said, which had international as well as intercolonial bearings. This question is not likely to be settled by the flourish of a pen, if the pen is held from making the required flourish, as it has been for the last 25 years. The *Advertiser* continues:—"In Victoria and Northern Colonies generally they are the gardeners and hawkers to the community, and they work profitably mines which have been abandoned by Europeans. A party of Chinamen will even buy, sometimes at the cost of several hundreds of pounds, a vast mound of 'tailings,' on which the most costly machinery of European science has been employed." With regard to their buying tailings which are said to be thrown away by Europeans, where is the country benefited by that? For if they give £100 they are likely to see their way to get £500, or perhaps £1,000 worth of gold out of it. If those tailings had been kept a few years—which could have been done at no cost—they would have been worked by Europeans—and a great many have been so worked—and the country would likely have benefited 80 per cent. instead of about 20 per cent. The poorest of them could now be treated with great profits to Europeans or the colonies if Mr. Edison's late discovery for their treatment is as represented.

It is said above that the Chinese in Victoria and the Northern Colonies generally are the gardeners and hawkers to the community. I have been in parts of the above-mentioned places where there were no Chinamen gardeners and hawkers, and never felt or heard it remarked that there were no vegetables to be got in sufficient quantities; nor was there any inconvenience felt for the want of Chinese hawkers, as both occupations were sufficiently well represented by men whose old age or misfortunes rendered them unfit for heavier work. A few years ago there were but few Chinamen in South Australia, but I never heard of a market day that was not fairly supplied with vegetables, and of a superior quality to those grown by Chinese. Their vegetables are like hay grown on a rich piece of land excessively manured, which will give quantity, but the quality you can try by giving a bit of it to a horse with a bit that was grown on average soil unforced.

You may guess he will keep the best for the last, like you do at the dinner table. If you think so, you will be mistaken.

Our friend near Waymouth-street says:—"The Chinese question may become a serious one. A Victorian orator observes that 'China by a tip of the bucket could flood the world,' but the bucket is not tipped, and the number of Celestials in Australia is diminishing, not increasing, so that there is no need to resort to anti-Chinese legislation." If the bucket is not tipped, it is a very leaky one, if it is not in reality a sieve, for there has landed in Sydney since 13th of last month between 600 and 1,000. If this looks like diminishing there must be more than that number gone with their £20, only to return with goods to smuggle into the colony.

Our friend above referred to also stated that "the Chinese, moreover, have rights which are protected by Imperial treaties, treaties which England herself has imposed on China at the point of the bayonet. They are under the shelter, therefore, of the national honour, and they are protected, too, by the not less sacred guards of humanity and justice. We must deal justly with them, deal with them as English settlers in China should be dealt with."

But how are the British settlers dealt with in China? The *Northern Territory Times* says:—"It may be interesting to understand with what liberality they receive the foreign trader on their land, and what encouragement they give merchants to trade among them. They were at one time so conservative we all know that they objected to any nation trading in their ports, and it was only after a severe lesson from England that they submitted to conform to the usage and practise of other countries. By the treaty signed 1841 it was made a misdemeanour for any individual or firm to conspire to injure the trade of another, a clause which was considered necessary owing to the prejudice which existed against the foreigner, and the Celestial character for secret combination and underhand dealing. For a few years, while the effects of the big guns of the western nation was vivid in their recollection, this clause was adhered to; but as the fears of the Chinese merchants subsided their intrigues increased, and at present it is almost impossible for foreign traders to do any business whatever in any of the Chinese ports. This underhand influence is becoming so common, and its effects so detrimental to Englishmen and others, that two British merchants, backed by the British Consul at Shanghai, entered an action against the Levaton Guild of that town for destroying their trade. The action is, of course, tried in a Chinese Court before the Taotai, or Chief Magistrate, and as the Hongkong daily Press remarks, the case is so slowly dragged along that it will be

many months before any decision is arrived at. The Taotai does not seem anxious to enforce the appearance of witnesses, nor to subject them to a severe cross-examination when they are before him. The witnesses give their evidence with the greatest reluctance, some openly stating that they were in fear of their lives from the men of the Levaton Guild, and others begged for the protection of the British Consul if they told the truth. It transpired from the evidence that one guild in Chinkiang derived an income of 20,000 thalers by squeezes on foreign goods; that the Chinese at Chankiang issued an interdict debarring the foreigners from selling a single bale of shirting without giving a month's credit. The guilds stopped business with one firm for some months until an arrangement was made, or until sufficient black-mail was paid. It was clearly proved that the Swatow Guild threatened some English merchants that if they shipped to Chinkiang their trade would be stopped at Shanghai, and in consequence not a single chest of opium has been sold by foreigners at Shanghai for nine months.

In all trade combinations foreigners are never consulted, and the underground current working on the foreign hongs is something astonishing. One firm in evidence states—"Not a single one of us can trade independently, and the treaty is no good at all so long as this underground system exists. To make the li-kins well known is what we want, and not to make and regulate it in such a way that the Chinese can undersell any of us in all foreign imports. It is out of the question to ask for redress in China, for the simple reason than when hong or guild becomes so strong as to hold the monopoly of any particular line it manages to secure the contract for farming the taxes on that line, and so the guild in a certain sense becomes a part of the Government, and it is not likely that the Laotai will press witnesses to give evidence in favour of the foreigner."

The British Consul when he addressed the Court, in part of his address, stated—"I come here and have taken all the trouble I have taken in this case, not merely to try and defend or support the case of British subjects against the Chinese, but because this is a very serious breach of the treaty, which ought to be put a stop to at once." But for all this justice will not be meted out, and the English will find themselves jostled every day more and more. Where the Chinese hold a monopoly, and where they are superior in number, they will stretch their power to the utmost as far as squeezing is concerned, not only in China, but in any other country. Even now, in the Northern Territory there is reason to suppose that the bosses among the Chinese by secret societies and commer-

cial associations exercise a strong influence on their own countrymen to the injury of European traders. You can't reason with the Chinese, but all the Europeans trading along the eastern coast are strongly of opinion that it is time they were taught another lesson.

From the above quotations we can gather what stress should be laid on their much-talked-of treaties. This underground or hand-in-hand system spoken of in the above has long been known to exist on the Australian Continent. Perhaps we could find a case to endorse this statement without going further than Adelaide, which, as yet, has not felt the shoe pinch.

I mentioned something about Chinese undermining society to a gentleman the other day. He said he had never looked at them in that light. But what do you think? The other day he advertised a paddock to let (in a suburb I need not mention). A Chinaman applied for it, and verbally took it. He wanted the water laid on, which was done to his order. He said, "You would not believe the number of Chinamen that came to inquire about it and went to see it before they would sign the agreement." He drew out an ordinary agreement for such purposes. They had it read over to them time after time. They wanted this put in and that put in, and after a number of meetings they signed the agreement, before I cannot say how many Chinese witnesses, and then messed away about three weeks. But through some misunderstanding about water-rates they backed out of the agreement, but paid the expense of laying on the water. While the yabber was going on among them, the one who spoke the best English said, "You see, we do all by the majority—majority." I think this instance will show the hand-in-hand practice adopted by them, for if they consult nearly the whole tribe over taking a garden plot, it is a proof of what they will do on more important questions. I do not think the statistics of our Chinese population can be taken with anything like correctness, for if one is molested outside of their quarters, and caused to give the signal of distress, the by-standers will find them pop out in numbers greatly exceeding their expetcations. The *Advertiser* says, "Don't they pay taxes?" Not the Northern Territory apparently. If they do in Australian at cities it is to the extent of about one-eighth per man for European. The Chinese know too much for the majority of our population. They appear to be able to twist around their fingers men of high standing. I do not know whether this is done without tips or squeezes, but I do see oocasionally how colonies or nations are bought by their cunning force. When they appeared to be getting it rather hot in America they struck one of their heavy, but inoffensive blows of nothing less

than 20,000,000 cartridges ordered from the Yankees. Was this order sent there because China had not men enough to make them? I do not think so. I think it was to check the American's action against their countrymen. They have learned the European's and the American's weak point, and they said to themselves—"We will send to America for 20,000,000 cartridges; it will make many of them think that we are going to open up a large trade with them. It will serve us two points; it will reverse the tongues of some of the Americans, and it will show an outward sign to the world or Russia of the preparations we are making for war. If we do not want to use them we can then sell them; the world has already learned that we can sell anything."

If Australia rises a disturbance with them we may expect to hear that a large order has been received in the colonies for tweeds, wheat, or wool. Then it will be quoted about as a proof of their worth, as they are about to open up a large trade with us; then perhaps have it all sold in Australia within twelve months.

I do not wish my countrymen much harm, so I hope the blind will soon receive sight.

A Poet takes John Chinaman by the hand.
Pray, what ground has he for his stand?
Has he ever been amongst them on a low level,
And for an honest crust had to resort to the pick and shovel?
Has ever real poverty been his path to walk?
If so, he found it hard to compete with what seems easy talk.

It's all very well for him to take a one-side view,
But to what extent will they contribute to the revenue?
Where there is one who will contribute as much as a white
There will be fifty that will be out of sight.
When the rate or miners' right collector goes his round,
Seldom will he find "All Right" on the ground.

Is it right that those from the so-called Flowery Land
Should be encouraged making chairs that will not stand?
Although they are made to look well enough to the eye,
And got at less cost, but are the dearest to buy.
For they will not stand or give satisfaction in wear—
No, nothing like that of the old English oak chair.

If we let John once get a fair footing,
The only way to get rid of him will be by shooting.
But this piece of work might not be so easy,
For they have ordered twenty million cartridges from the Yankee.
These few, if John is anything of a shot,
Would soon pop off Australia's little lot.

That squatter's crop of torpedoes or flock of steam rams
Will be of no more use than if they were buried in the sands,
For the Johns will be already on the ground,
And have a strong hold of every street in town.
But then it will be far too late to say,
I wish I did more to keep the Chinese away.

The docile, meek John Chinaman;
Some say, find better if you can.
One even recommended him as a nurse—
Surely he must have been thinking of his purse.
Or perhaps he was weak, and wanted some ease,
But, as a girl was no good, he chose one of these.

Men in the newspaper way I find
Rather too much this way inclined;
But these might change when they've known John longer,
And look rather blue when they have nothing for the vendor.
For advertisements or papers how much do they get
From this cunning, meek, and docile set?

This is a question I am at a loss to understand—
How men of reasoning powers will uphold this pig-tailed band.
The Chinese are feathery thieves, but some are worse than they,
For they rob themselves and families of their very pay.
All their little ones might not ride this world so high
As their sires, who now a fall think they can defy.

The parson, he might hold the same views,
Until he commences to preach to empty pews,
And his small congregation have no spare cash,
Then he will be inclined to preach and practise rash;
For it is impossible for him to live
If his congregation has nothing to give.

The merchant, too, must be on the alert,
For the Chinkeys know what they are about;
For as long as it suits they will deal with you,
But when it is late you'll find this tale true—
That they can well act the merchant too,
And prove to be rivals that you can't outdo.

LETTERS AS PUBLISHED IN "ADVERTISER" AND "OBSERVER."

THE CHINESE QUESTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "ADVERTISER."

According to your quotation in the *Express* of May 14 of an extract from the Melbourne *Daily Telegraph*, it says:—"There is one aspect of the Chinese question that has not been touched upon, and that is the actual value of Chinese labour. Assuming an Asiatic cabinetmaker earns on an average 6s. 6d. per day by working nine hours, can he produce the same result, either in quantity or quality, that the Anglo-Australian artisan can do, who works eight hours per diem and receives 10s. from his employer?" I cannot see clearly through this question. Is it intended to ask if a Chinaman can do as much of the same quality of work in nine hours as an Anglo-Australian can do in eight hours, for which one receives 6s. 6d. and the other 10s.? If this is the way it is intended, I am of opinion that a European or Anglo-Australian can do far more in eight hours than a Chinaman can in nine or even twelve hours. Or is the question intended to be asked in this way:—Can a Chinaman do the same amount of work in about fifteen hours as an Anglo-Australian can do in eight hours for the same money? If it took three Chinese (or one twenty-four hours) to do the work of one European they will then take possession of the labour market. I believe that on one-third of the Anglo-Australian's wages the Chinese would live in accordance with their style, and then save money. I think I have seen in your columns, Mr. Editor, that they were working for the Government of this colony at the Northern Territory for 1s. per day. Could Europeans live on 3s. per day at the same place? I should be very sorry to try. In the first place what is the average rent—in towns like Melbourne or Sydney—of the Chinese per man? If one Celestial rents a house for say 12s. per week, there are generally eight or more sheltered under that roof, making their rent per man about 1s. 6d. per week. The European who has to compete against those men would have to pay 12s. for a small cottage for his family out of his earnings; but taking married and single Anglo-Australian men of the working class, I estimate their average rental to be 8s. per man against 1s. 6d. per Chinaman. Next take boots, clothing, food, &c., say the average cost per man—married and single—be 35s. per week, which ought to be low enough for Europeans. Cannot the Chinaman do with less than one-third that amount? I say yes, much less; it is rather difficult to give an estimate of their living and clothing, but I have known Chinamen whose loose dress seemed to last an incredible length of time, their wooden solid boots they can make themselves at a trifling cost; most of their clothing they get from China and a great portion of their food. I have seen eight Chinese squat down for breakfast upon a 2-lb. loaf of bread, a three-quart billy of tea, and a few spoonfuls of rice, and then go apparently satisfied and do half a day's work cutting and carrying saplings. Mind they had not to do with this through poverty or inability to get better; the men were being fed by Chinese employers, who had money at their command to the extent, I might say, of hundreds, and were living in a large township. You and your readers might be inclined to compare some of my notes with what you have seen of the few who are now in Adelaide, but there is but little comparison between the few that are here and some places in Australia

where they are becoming numerous. They just drive in the thin end of the wedge, and find it work their purpose. When they first (that is the first few) come into a town they will go into an hotel for a drink. For their first building (if there is not a suitable one they can rent) they call tenders from Europeans. They will also deal with the storekeeper. It is surprising how many men capable of reasoning can be smoothed over by this bit of cunning action. Let the Mongolians get a footing, then the cry will be still they come, and at the same time they will drive away European labour. I think the question is this—Are Europeans or Anglo-Australians to be continually opening up new country, making homes and improving them fit for their habitation, and then as soon as they reach that state are we to allow the Chinese to come as they like and plunder the country as they are now doing in some parts of this continent? They will do the same here if some men have their way. I do not believe that 10 per cent. of Chinese earnings is again put into circulation amongst Europeans. When the yellow faces become numerous they buy as little as possible from Europeans. They have their own merchants and storekeepers, and spend almost entirely amongst themselves, but are always selling to Europeans. They pick up Australian money in every way, and in all directions. Goldfields they take before they are half worked by their finders. They will explore or prospect but little or nothing for themselves. No, John saveys too much for that. They are not such fools as to go to the expense and risk that is to be encountered in opening up or exploring new country, while they can get us to do it, and then let them come and go and do as they like. Look at New Guinea, with a climate and soil according to reports equal if not superior to that of China; this they have close to their country unclaimed by any Government, but this they will pass time after time to ransack Australia for its gold and money. Let those who fancy Chinese cheap labour go to New Guinea and open up that country with them, not come here blowing their Chinese trumpets to call the pest here and bring ruination to their fellow-countrymen, who have this country adopted for their future—a country that was known to the Chinese, if reports are true, and rejected by them long before Cook's time. I have long been in hopes of seeing some able and practised pen take this subject in hand, but they are so slow in coming that I have deemed it necessary for the future welfare of Australia to put a spoke in this wheel of fortune with the hope of a true circle being filled in by others that it may in the future run smoothly.

I am, Sir, &c.,

R. SHAPLAND.

Adelaide, 15th May, 1880.

THE CHINESE QUESTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "OBSERVER."

Sir—From the late publications I learn that this subject is still under debate in Australia and America. I hope that action will soon be taken to stop the spreading of Chinese, if not entirely banishing them from European settlements, which they soon impoverish and monopolise, so far as the labour markets are concerned. Within the last few years many persons in Adelaide have advocated their introduction into South Australia, and I believe the Government have actually brought them from Asia to the northern part of this colony, under the pretence that without them it was impossible to develop the resources of that territory. If a cheaper labour than European is necessary for the development of the Northern Territory, why are the Chinese chosen, when they have proved to be far inferior to many other kinds of labour that is obtainable and better adapted to plantation work. Those who have been in Demerara and other plantation countries

say the Chinese are more unsatisfactory and unworkable than any other labourers there employed. What have the Chinese in the Northern Territory done up to the present time? They appear to have driven away most of the Europeans, and are now becoming a burden to the Government of this colony.

I think it has been proved beyond a doubt that European labour cannot compete fairly with the Chinese. If it cost the Chinese as much to live as it does Europeans there would be less danger; but Europeans have been brought up to a diet which costs about six times as much as it takes to feed the Chinese. I should like to see the faces of eight of these advocates sitting down to a breakfast consisting of a three-quart billy of tea, a 2-lb. loaf, and a few spoonsful of rice. After taking this they are expected to go and do half a day's work. This is a meal I have seen eight Chinese squat down to, and afterwards go to their work, apparently satisfied. China sends her men here for gold and money, and most of their requirements to them. They buy as little as possible from Europeans, but are always selling to them. I believe little more than 10 per cent. of the money that gets into their hands is again put into circulation amongst the Europeans. I would like to know if any of their advocates can answer any of the following questions in favour of the Chinese:—Has the European population increased or decreased since the introduction of Chinese into the Northern Territory? Have the Customs returns increased or decreased? How many Chinese are found employment by the Government on relief works? How long will they work before they say, "Me sick?" How many are there who have a few pounds working for Europeans, unless at a high rate of wages?

When they have gathered a few pounds they take a tumbledown shop, and start to ruin the cabinetmaking and other trades, or fence in a bend of a creek or waterhole to grow or force cesspit squash, which some call cabbage. Thus they offer and find ready sale for food, a substance the Adelaide Board of Health would fine ordinary inhabitants for keeping. One-fourth of the quantity of vegetables grown by Europeans in the natural way is worth more for food than those grown by the Chinese. When Chinese become numerous they take possession of everything in the shape of employment that should fall to our nationality; they will even rob the widow of the opportunity of gaining a living at the wash-tub. In one part of Hindley-street they are taking shop after shop. In the front of one of these shops I witnessed lately a girl about eleven or twelve years old, and three Chinese offering all kinds of promises and temptations to entice the girl in. In your remarks on the letter published from the Anti-Chinese Association of Queensland you say many of the Chinese in these colonies are harmless and inoffensive persons, and greatly superior to many of the lazy, loafing, European colonists. There may be some to whom these remarks may apply, but there are many able and willing hands who are doing their utmost to obtain employment, but are unable to get it. You say the Chinese are harmless and inoffensive, and so are rabbits if you have a few in a box, but if they are let loose they increase and become so numerous that they will rob their very liberators of their means of bread.

Your Northern Territory correspondent, under date January 24, 1880, says that "storekeeping, boating, carpentering, baking, washing, &c., are fast getting into the hands of Chinese, and driving away European labour. They work for one another at about half the rate they do for white employers; work longer hours, and go in for seven days a week. The consequence of this has been felt for some time, and now begins to be seen. All who can leave the Territory are doing so; others unable to do so do not manage to get a bare living. Stock of all descriptions is valueless, and no property here is good enough to raise the wind on.

What it will be about April, when the remaining Government money for this year is spent, and the hordes of Chinese now up country come down again, may be easily guessed."

This is spoken of the place where you say the Chinese are a necessity for the development of the country. Yes, they will develop that country, and take full possession before long.

I think Stock Inspectors' attention should be called to these animals, that he might inspect them closely. I would willingly supply him with a pair of spectacles for use on such occasions, with pleuro scratched upon the glass, so that he could not fail to see it, and order them to be destroyed or inoculated with something that will ease them of their tails before landing or crossing the Border.

I am, Sir, &c.,
R. SHAPLAND.

THE END.

So now to end;
Pray do send
The tailed-Johns to Jericho; and lend
And aid your country to befriend.

Webb, Vardon, & Pritchard, Printers, Gresham-street, Adelaide.

University of California
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
305 De Neve Drive - Parking Lot 17 • Box 951388
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90095-1388
Return this material to the library from which it was borrowed.

9/30/06

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 000 093 900 9

ity of Cali
hern Regio
ary Facilit